

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

46

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, SY, OVIP (H.A. KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: ALLEGED BREZHNEV MESSAGE TO ASAD

FOR SECRETARY FROM SAUNDERS

1. YOU MAY SEE MENTION OF ALLEGED TEXT OF BREZHNEV MESSAGE TO ASAD OF JULY 11 THAT APPEARED IN LE MONDE, JULY 20, AND I WANT YOU TO BE AWARE OF ITS NATURE. FOLLOWING IS OUR TRANSLATION OF LE MONDE ARTICLE.

2. BEGIN TEXT. "THE RECENT MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO SYRIA ON JULY 11 BY THE USSR WHICH INVITED IT TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM LEBANON (LE MONDE OF JULY 14) HAS NOT BEEN PUBLISHED. THE TEXT HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN COMMUNICATED TO THE PLO, TO MR. KEMAL JUMBLATT, THE LEADER OF THE LEBANESE PROGRESSIVE FRONT, AND TO OTHER 'FRIENDLY' GOVERNMENTS, NOTABLY IRAQ AND LIBYA. THE EXTENSIVE EXTRACTS THAT WE ARE REPRODUCING BELOW HAVE BEEN TRANSLATED FROM ARABIC TO FRENCH THROUGH OUR EFFORTS. THE TEXT IS ENTITLED:

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

'MESSAGE FROM LEONID BREZHNEV TO THE SYRIAN LEADERS.'

3. "PERMIT ME, WRITES THE SOVIET LEADER, TO POSE A DIRECT QUESTION FOR YOU AT THE START: WHO IS RUBBING HIS HANDS

WITH JOY WHILE OBSERVING THE EVENTS IN THE LEBANON? NATURALLY, THE IMPERIALISTS. (...) WE, YOU AND I, WERE PERSUADED THAT THE (PALESTINE) RESISTANCE MOVEMENT CONSTITUTES ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL PILLARS OF THE STRUGGLE AGAINST THE ISRAELI AGGRESSORS AND AGAINST IMPERIALISM. WE, YOU AND I, CONSIDER THE LEADERS OF THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT AS FRIENDS AND AS PATRIOTS WHO REPRESENT THE ARAB PEOPLE OF PALESTINE.

4. "HOWEVER, WHAT IS HAPPENING AT PRESENT? ON THE MOVING PLANE WE OBSERVE THAT EFFORTS ARE UNDER WAY TO SMASH THE RESISTANCE AND THE LEBANESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT. WHO ARE THE ASSAILANTS? THEY ARE THE LEBANESE FORCES OF THE RIGHT, SUPPORTED BY THE SYRIAN ARMY. HOW CAN WE SIZE UP THE SITUATION OTHERWISE WHEN WE OBSERVE THAT THE PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE FORCES ARE BESEIGED (AND) THAT THE SYRIAN ARMY IS IMPOSING A BLOCKADE OF THE (LEBANESE) PORTS. OUR OBSERVATIONS ARE BASED ON THE FACTS THAT REACH US NOT ONLY FROM RADIO STATIONS AND COMMUNIQUE, BUT FROM OUR OWN NATIONALS WHO ARE ON THE SPOT AND WHO COMMUNICATE TO US THE INFORMATION THAT WE ARE IN POSSESSION OF.

5. "HOW COULD WE INTERPRET OTHERWISE THIS INFORMATION WHEN YOU HAVE NOT BEEN IN POSITION UP TO NOW TO DELIVER TO THE PALESTINIANS AND TO THE LEBANESE THE MEDICINES AND FOODS THAT THE SOVIET RED CROSS WAS OFFERING THEM? WE REGRET TO OBSERVE THAT THE SYRIAN ARMY WHICH IS IN LEBANON HAS NOT FURNISHED US ANY ASSISTANCE IN THIS REGARD.

6. "WE KNOW THAT THE RESISTANCE AND THE LEBANESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT ARE DEMANDING AN IMMEDIATE CEASE-FIRE AND THAT IT IS YOUR FORCES WHICH ARE OPPOSED TO THE HALTING OF COMBAT. THAT SUSTAINS AND INTENSIFIES THE SPILLING OF BLOOD IN THE LEBANON. WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

EITHER YOUR COURSE OF ACTION OR THE OBJECTIVES WHICH YOU ARE PURSUING IN LEBANON.

7. "IT IS AS A FRIEND THAT WE EXPRESS OURSELVES WITH ALL FRANKNESS. MOREOVER, WHO ELSE THAN WE COULD SPEAK TO YOU IN THIS SAME MANNER? IT IS OUR DUTY TO LOOK TO THE FUTURE, THE NEAR-TERM AND THE LONG-TERM. IF SYRIA PERSISTS IN THE COURSE ON WHICH IT IS EMBARKED, IT WILL

GIVE TO THE IMPERIALISTS AND TO THEIR COLLABORATORS THE POSSIBILITY TO PLACE UNDER THEIR CONTROL THE ARAB PEOPLES AND THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENTS (OF THAT REGION) AS WELL AS THE ARAB STATES ENDOWED WITH PROGRESSIVE REGIMES.

8. "WE ARE FOLLOWING WITH CONCERN THE POSITIONS TAKEN AND THE ORIENTATION OF SYRIA ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE. WE INVITE YOU TO BE PRUDENT. WE EXHORT THE SYRIAN LEADERS TO DO ALL IN THEIR POWER TO PUT AN END TO THE MILITARY OPERATIONS DIRECTED AGAINST THE RESISTANCE AND THE LEBANESE NATIONAL MOVEMENT. THE FIRST STEP IN THIS DIRECTION SHOULD BE THE IMMEDIATE HALT TO COMBAT. YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THIS BY WITHDRAWING YOUR FORCES FROM LEBANON. A GOOD OPPORTUNITY IS OFFERED TO YOU, NAMELY THE PROVISIONAL INSTALLATION OF ARAB FORCES IN LEBANON.

9. "WE ARE CONVINCED THAT SUCH MEASURES CORRESPOND TO THE INTERESTS OF SYRIA ITSELF. I ASK YOU TO REFLECT WELL AND WITH SERENITY ON THIS MATTER, TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE DANGERS THAT I HAVE JUST RAISED. IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION OUR POINT OF VIEW WHICH COULD HELP YOU TO FIND A JUST SOLUTION, AN OUTCOME FOR A DIFFICULT AND PERILOUS SITUATION WHICH SERVES ONLY THE POLICIES AND INTEREST OF IMPERIALISM.

10. "IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT WE ARE ALWAYS READY TO CONSOLIDATE THE BONDS OF FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES AND TO SURMOUNT THE DIFFICULTIES RAISED BY THE TRANSITORY SITUATION IN LEBANON. IN THIS CASE, THE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR COUNTRY TOWARD YOU IS ASSURED IN A STABLE FASHION, UNLESS SYRIA BEHAVES IN A WAY THAT MAKES FISSURES APPEAR IN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04     STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

11. "WE WOULD BE THANKFUL TO YOU TO HAVE THE KINDNESS TO SUBMIT US YOUR IDEAS TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION WHAT WE HAVE EXPOSED TO YOU IN THE PRESENT LETTER." END TEXT.

12. JUST ANALYZING THE STYLE AND FORM OF THE LE MONDE TEXT IS INCONCLUSIVE. IT IS INCOMPLETE IN THE LE MONDE ARTICLE. MOREOVER, ACCORDING TO THE PAPER, ITS VERSION IS A TRANSLATION FROM ARABIC TO FRENCH AND NOW, OF COURSE, INTO ENGLISH.

13. THE CONTENT OF THE LE MONDE MESSAGE DOES CONFORM TO RECENT SOVIET PUBLIC AND PRIVATE STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE:

--CHARGED THAT LEBANESE EVENTS WARM THE HEARTS OF THE

IMPERIALISTS;

--CALLED FOR A HALT TO THE FIGHTING;

--SUPPORTED THE PALESTINIAN AND LEBANESE LEFTIST CAUSE;

AND

--LEVELED CRITICISM AT SYRIA'S MILITARY ROLE IN THE WAR.

14. HOWEVER, THE ALLEGED TEXT GOES FURTHER THAN ANY PREVIOUS TEXTS WE HAVE SEEN BY IMPLICITLY MAKING CONTINUATION OF SOVIET FRIENDSHIP DEPENDENT ON SYRIAN WILLINGNESS TO AVOID BEHAVIOR WHICH "MAKES FISSURES APPEAR" IN THE RELATIONSHIP (PARA. 10 ABOVE). WE DO NOT DOUBT THE SOVIETS' ABILITY TO DEMONSTRATE UNEXPECTED BLUNTNESS, AND IT SEEMS LIKELY THE SOVIETS WOULD WANT THE PALESTINIANS AND LIBYANS TO BELIEVE THEY ARE PRESSING SYRIA HARD. HOWEVER, THE IMPLIED THREAT THAT SOVIET FRIENDSHIP WILL CEASE UNLESS SYRIA CEASES ITS CAMPAIGN IN LEBANON SEEMS TO REPRESENT A RISK-ALL APPROACH WHICH WOULD BE UNCHARACTERISTIC OF SOVIET BEHAVIOR, AT LEAST IN A WRITTEN DOCUMENT TREATED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO MAKE ITS PUBLICATION LIKELY.

15. DOUBT IS ALSO CAST ON THE MESSAGE'S AUTHENTICITY BY  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 181580 TOSEC 190035

LE MONDE'S REPORT THAT IT WAS "COMMUNICATED" TO THE PLO, KEMAL JUMBLATT, LEADERS OF THE "PROGRESSIVE FRONT," AND IRAQ AND LIBYA. MOSCOW FREQUENTLY CIRCULARIZES OFFICIAL STATEMENTS OF POLICY OR VIEWS, BUT FOR THE SOVIETS TO TRANSMIT "DROP COPIES" OF A PERSONAL MESSAGE OF THIS CHARACTER FROM BREZHNEV TO THESE ADDRESSEES, PARTICULARLY JUMBLATT, WOULD BE QUITE UNUSUAL.

16. FOR THESE REASONS, WE BELIEVE THERE IS A QUESTION ABOUT THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE LE MONDE TEXT. ARABS OPPOSING SYRIA WOULD HAVE AN INTEREST IN CREATING THE IMPRESSION THAT THE USSR IS BEHIND THEM. IN SAYING THIS, I EMPHASIZE THAT I AM ADDRESSING ONLY THE LIMITED QUESTION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THIS SUPPOSED TEXT. IT IS APPARENT THAT THE SYRIANS AND SOVIETS ARE AT ODDS OVER SYRIA'S LEBANON POLICY, AND SHARP DISAGREEMENT HAS APPEARED IN THEIR EXCHANGES. ON THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE SOVIETS PUT THEIR VIEWS IN WRITING IN THIS WAY, WE THINK IT IS WORTH CONSIDERING THAT THE LE MONDE TEXT IS A MISREPRESENTATION. ROBINSON

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